



# HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

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## Northern Tier Consortium Meeting

By Pete Mohan [pmohan@mt.gov](mailto:pmohan@mt.gov)

The Northern Tier Interoperability Consortium (NTIC) board of directors and technical representatives met via teleconference on Thurs., July 3. Project Director Wayne Dusterhoff, opened the meeting and members approved the minutes from the June meeting.

Mark Adams, Northrop Grumman, delivered an update on the progress of interoperability site development along the Northern Tier. The group discussed progress and the development of enhanced coverage as a result of the project. Currently, the Northern Tier is in construction with a large percentage of sites able to accept trunking and microwave connectivity. Frequency approvals and fleet mapping processes are progressing. Cindy Mullaney, Flathead County Representative, presented information on fleet mapping and business practices. Scott Bradford, Public Safety Services Bureau, briefed the board about COPS grant purchases of subscriber units.

The next meeting of the NTIP meeting will be held on Thurs., Aug. 7 beginning at 9:00 am at the Great Northern Inn, 1345 1<sup>st</sup> St, in Havre.

## Lewis and Clark Microwave Ring Upgrade

By Dale Osborne [dosborne@mt.gov](mailto:dosborne@mt.gov)

Key to expansion of the Interoperability Montana ((M) Radio Communications System was upgrading bandwidth capacity from 28 T-1s to 84 T-1s on the Lewis and Clark Microwave Ring. This task was successfully accomplished on June 11. But it was not without some discouraging moments.

Even though the upgrade work was re-scheduled several times due to snowy wet weather, it still ended up taking place in the middle of a spring-summer snow storm. The crews gathered at the Stark Armory on June 10 to conduct training



Workers receive training prior to visiting mountaintop sites to complete the Lewis and Clark microwave ring upgrade.

and make sure that all laptops had the correct firmware update files and programming software installed.

Upgrade work took place at six different sites, to which personnel had to travel. Roger Smith, Montana Highway Patrol (MHP), and John Marroquin, Harris-Stratex rode two ATVs that had been modified with tracks to the Hogback site. Roger said he started the day at 5:30 am, and finished at 10:30 pm. "That's getting to be a normal schedule," he said. "In the last six weeks, I worked an extra 71 hours, which is just about equivalent to accomplishing eight weeks of work in six."

Mike Kaufman, MHP, and Bob Partin, Harris-Stratex, went to the Belmont site. Everyone agreed that Mike and Bob looked like icemen when they got off the ATVs after working several hours in blowing wet spring snow. Bob Partin may never return to Montana in the spring, fall or winter!

Jason

Norman, MDoT, was assigned the MacDonald Pass site, while Erick Alsager and I, both with MHP,



travelled to the Wirth Ranch site. Kevin Bruski, MDoT, Jack Spillman, Flathead County, and Roger Hayes, Motorola manned the Lewis and Clark Law Enforcement Center (LEC). Neil Silvers, Harris-Stratex, was stationed at the Armory and ran the show via cell phones and 2-way radios that used the Hogback interop repeater.

During the process, all firmware and memory cards had to be updated. In addition, all the Intelligent Node Units (INU), which is where all memory cards plug into, had to be changed to INUe's, which have greater capacity and expansion capabilities.

Despite being stuck in blowing snow and white-out conditions and, in some cases, having to dig out of snow drifts, all the parties made it to their sites and the actual upgrade went smoothly with very few issues. Jack Spillman reported that the entire upgrade process was efficient and easier than



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teaching folks to use the old legacy radio system in the Helena Valley.

Without the dedicated efforts of the above-mentioned staff, the upgrade would not have been accomplished. Many thanks go to all of you.

## Lewis & Clark Parallel Path Microwave Installation Makes Great Strides

By E. Wing Spooner [espooner@mt.gov](mailto:espooner@mt.gov)

Roger Smith, Montana Highway Patrol, reports that in addition to the Lewis and Clark County microwave ring upgrade work, which was completed on June 14, great strides are being made to complete work on the Lewis and Clark microwave parallel path. Both systems will carry trunking T-1 capacity to the Master Control Site in the Lewis and Clark LEC as well as data T-1 capacity to Fort Harrison to meet National Guard and MDoT requirements.

Some of the accomplishments to date are as follows:

- Installation of parallel path antennas from the LEC to the Stark Armory.
- Installation of parallel path antennas from the Stark Armory to McDonald Pass.
- Installation of passive path antennas at the transfer station.

It is anticipated that the following tasks will be completed this weekend:

- Installation of microwave radios at the LEC and Armory.
- Installation of the microwave path between McDonald Pass and the Armory.

Kudos are again in order to everyone responsible for all the great work that is getting accomplished.

## Upcoming Meetings

### July 14

IM Finance Committee  
Helena • 9:00 am - Noon  
Anderson & ZurMuehlen • 828 Great Northern Blvd.

### July 14

IM Governance Committee  
Helena • Noon - 5:00 pm  
DOC Annex Conf. Rm.; Behind 515 N. Sanders St.

### July 15

IM Project Directors (IMPD) Meeting  
Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm • State Capitol

### July 16

South Central Consortium (SCMIC)  
Bozeman • 10:00 am  
Emergency Operations Center, 219 East Tamarack

### July 17

I-15/90 Corridor Consortium  
Butte • 10:00 am • Chamber of Commerce  
1000 George St.

### July 21

Tri-County Consortium  
Helena • 10:00 am  
DOC Annex Conf. Rm.; Behind 515 N. Sanders St.

### July 22

Western Interoperability Comm. Consortium (WICC)  
Thompson Falls • 10:00 am • Sanders County  
Location to be announced

### July 28

IM Technical Committee (IMTC) Meeting  
Helena • 9:00 am • State Capitol • Room 172

### August 4

IM Finance Committee  
Helena • 9:00 am - Noon  
Anderson & ZurMuehlen • 828 Great Northern Blvd.

### August 4

IM Governance Committee  
Helena • Noon - 5:00 pm  
DOC Annex Conf. Rm.; Behind 515 N. Sanders St.

### August 5

IM Project Directors (IMPD) Meeting  
Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm • State Capitol

### August 13

Central Montana Consortium (CMICC)  
Lewistown • 10:00 am  
Location to be Announced

### August 20

Eastern Tier Consortium (ETIC)  
Glendive • 10:00 am  
Law Enforcement Center; 440 Colorado Blvd.

### August 25

Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) Consortium  
Bozeman • 10:00 am • City Center Motel  
507 W Main St.

### August 26

Big Sky 11 Consortium  
Roundup • 10:00 am • Location to be Announced